State of Palestine
Ministry of Health
Minister's Office

دولـــة فـلسـطين
وزارة الصحة
مكتب الوزير

Updated Report: Sunday, 31st of December 2023

The eighty-sixth Day of the Israeli aggression against Palestine

Daily Report on the Effects of the Israeli Aggression in Palestine

From October 7 until December 31st, 2023

Some of the information contained in this report is as of Saturday evening, 31st of December 2023.

The Emergency Operations Center at the Ministry of Health in Ramallah supervises the data collection process through its offices in Gaza. Numbers are updated every 24 hours. These numbers reflect confirmed statistics only but do not necessarily reflect all victims due to the fact that many victims are still missing under the rubble.

The escalating atrocities in Palestine as a result of Israeli aggression surpass mere numerical reporting, constituting severe violations of all human rights. The health system is deliberately targeted, amounting to brutal war on the Palestinian people. This insufferable situation demands immediate intervention. We call upon all international humanitarian and health organizations to urgently enter Gaza, ensuring protection for health workers, facilities, and civilians. A tangible advocacy for an immediate ceasefire and an end to the ongoing siege on Gaza is imperative to halt this humanitarian crisis.[1][2][3]

Current Situation:

- On December 30, there is no safe place in Gaza strip extensive Israeli occupation bombardment persisted throughout the Gaza Strip from air, land, and sea especially in the refugee camps in central Gaza.
- between 7 October and 30 December, at least 21,672 Palestinians were killed in Gaza. About 70 per cent of those killed are said to be women and children. As of then, 56,165 Palestinians have been injured. Thousands of people are missing, buried under the rubble, with many still waiting for rescue or recovery.
- On December 30, the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza successfully resumed services, boosting the capacity of several hospitals in the northern region, including Al Ahli Arab Hospital, the Patients Friends charity hospital, Al Helou International hospital, and Al Awda hospital, along with various primary care centers. Despite challenges posed by continuous bombings in residential areas and the close proximity of health facilities, medical teams persevered in their crucial work.

- [1] https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/11/gaza-un-experts-call-international-community-prevent-genocide-against
- [2] https://www.un.org/unispal/document/gaza-un-experts-decry-bombing-of-hospitals-and-schools-as-crimes-against-humanity-call-for-prevention-of-genocide/
- [3] https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20231229-pre-01-00-en.pdf?fbclid=PAAaanjzZcW1N3X8xUa5n2vOtSmJXRZGtuX25ee7DicJ6IvDv9355FU9Nco_w_aem_Af1J7V-j8lYZ0pM_D1CQooNZ6b2lctzS9pzFrRP92oaCO9tBVKTDkMB8DYqdS1aGUDk

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- The MoH in Gaza, in collaboration with UNRWA and WHO, is actively coordinating a plan to reactivate health centers, aiming to address the urgent needs of displaced individuals in various locations.
- MoH emphasizes the critical importance of prioritizing the evacuation of over 5,300 individuals facing severe and complex medical conditions in Gaza to receive the necessary and appropriate care abroad.
- Collaborative efforts between the MoH and WHO are in progress to establish effective mechanisms with all involved parties, facilitating the safe transfer of the wounded and sick for treatment abroad.
- The amount of aid reaching Gaza continues to be significantly insufficient. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator has stated that the current situation is impossible for both the people of Gaza and those attempting to provide assistance. The urgent plea emphasizes the need for an end to the ongoing Israeli occupation attacks.
- Since 11 October, the Gaza Strip has been under an electricity blackout, after the Israeli occupation cut off the electricity supply, and fuel reserves for Gaza's sole power plant were depleted. The communications and fuel shutdown continues to significantly hinder the aid community's efforts to assess the full extent of needs in Gaza and to adequately respond to the deepening humanitarian crisis.

attacks on Health care:

- reports on December 30 detailed an air raid near the European Hospital, resulting in injuries to an unconfirmed number of civilians and the tragic loss of five lives.
- The previous day, on December 29, several hospitals' surroundings continued to be targeted. An Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis witnessed an incident where a nearby house was hit, leading to the injury of ten individuals. Simultaneously, a residence near the Jordanian Field Hospital, situated west of Khan Younis, was struck, resulting in the death of three Palestinians and injuries to five others.
- On 28 December, the vicinity of Al Amal hospital was struck for the second day in a row and for the fifth time this week, according to PRCS. Ten people were reportedly killed as a result of this latest strike and 31 were reported killed the previous day. In both incidents, dozens were reportedly wounded. It is estimated that 14,000 FDPs are sheltering in the hospital and its surroundings.
- The Israeli genocidal attacks in Gaza mark the highest-ever total of assaults on healthcare facilities and their personnel. Schools have also suffered extensive damage, with 51% of educational facilities affected. This pattern signifies a blatant violation of established humanitarian norms and principles.

Population and Displacement:

- Obtaining an accurate figure of the total number of FDPs remains challenging. According to UNRWA, 1.9 million people in Gaza, or nearly 85 % of the population, are estimated to be internally displaced, including people who have been displaced multiple times, as families are forced to move repeatedly in search of safety.

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- Preliminary estimates by humanitarian actors on the ground continue to witness a high influx of forcibly displaced persons (FDPs) who have arrived in Rafah, the most southern city in Gaza in recent days, following the intensification of Israeli occupation attacks in Khan Younis and Deir al Balah, and evacuation orders.
- Already on 20 December, Rafah was estimated to be the most densely populated area in Gaza, exceeding 12,000 people per square kilometer. The new influx of FDPs has further exacerbated conditions related to the already overcrowded space and limited resources. The scope of displacement resulting from this evacuation order remains unclear.
- Lack of food, basic survival items, and poor hygiene, further exacerbate the already dire living conditions of FDPs, amplify protection and mental health issues, and increase the spread of disease.
- Nearly 1.2 million FDPs were registered in 154 UNRWA facilities across Gaza, of whom about one million are registered in 94 UNRWA shelters in the south.
- Obtaining accurate data regarding the forcibly displaced persons is challenging, given difficulties in tracking FDPs staying with host families or in the streets.

Public Health catastrophe:

- December 30, MoH drew attention to the vulnerable status of children and women. They emphasized the increased risk of multiple psychological effects stemming from the intense bombardment, displacement and food insecurity coupled with severe physical injuries such as the loss of body parts. These challenges are further compounded by the devastating impact of seeing the bodies of the casualties around them and losing family members, homes, and dignity.
- The spread of diseases in Gaza has reportedly intensified, particularly due to the recent mass displacements across the south of Gaza. Some families have been forced to move multiple times. This situation adds strain to an already overwhelmed health system, which is struggling to meet the immense needs of the population. On 29 December, the head of the World Health Organization (WHO) in the occupied Palestinian territory announced that people living in shelters in Gaza have continued to fall ill. Close to 180,000 people are suffering from upper respiratory infections; there are 136,400 cases of diarrhea (half of these among children under five years old); 55,400 cases of lice and scabies; 5,330 cases of chickenpox; 42,700 cases of skin rash (including 4,722 cases of impetigo); 4,683 cases of Acute Jaundice Syndrome; and 126 cases of meningitis.
- On 29 December, 600,000 vaccines were delivered to the Gaza Strip by UNICEF, as part of the routine immunization program. In 2024, the vaccines will be administered to over 292,000 eligible infants and children under five by the MoH, in cooperation with humanitarian partners, including UNRWA and local NGOs in operating health centers and in shelters. Since the start of hostilities, over 16,854 infants missed one or more routine vaccines.
- Recent reports show that inside the shelters half of pregnant women experience thirst, malnutrition, and insufficient healthcare, while an equal percentage of displaced children face challenges such as dehydration, malnutrition, respiratory and skin ailments, severe cold, and a lack of vaccinations for newborns.

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- Gaza Strip hospitals that are partially functioning encounter obstacles on top of exceeding their capacity with 205% and sheltering FDPs, including a deficiency in medical personnel such as specialized surgeons, neurosurgeons, and intensive care staff. Furthermore, there is a shortage of essential medical supplies like anesthesia, antibiotics, pain relief medications, and external fixators. Moreover, there is a pressing requirement for fuel, food, and potable water, posing a significant public health threat.
- The entire population in the Gaza Strip is at an imminent risk of famine, reported by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) on December 21, due to the conflict's impact and restricted humanitarian access, resulting in catastrophic levels of acute food insecurity.
- Gaza is facing a critical stock-out of vaccinations, leading to catastrophic health repercussions. More than 360,000 cases of infectious diseases, including acute respiratory infections, meningitis, jaundice, impetigo, and chickenpox, have been recorded in UNRWA shelters.
- The food security situation worsens in the south, with 44% of households reporting very severe hunger.
- The lack of formula for babies and poor sanitary conditions at UNRWA shelters contribute to the public health crisis.
- Decomposing remains of Gaza civilians pose a significant risk, heightening the threat of a public health crisis.
- Sewage flowing in the streets stopped pumping stations, and non-functional water wells contribute to unsanitary conditions, raising the risk of infectious diseases.
- Immediate and critical need for blankets, warm clothing, and adequate shelters with the onset of winter, as forcibly displaced persons (FDPs) face floods with ill-prepared makeshift shelters.
- Vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities, pregnant and breastfeeding women, individuals recovering from injuries or surgeries, and those with weakened immune systems, face challenging shelter conditions.

> *"Unless something changes, the world faces the prospect of almost a quarter of Gaza's 2 million population - close to half- a million human beings - dying within a year. These would be largely deaths from preventable health causes and the collapse of the medical system. It's a crude estimate, but one that is data-driven, using the terrifyingly real numbers of deaths in previous and comparable conflicts."* Prof Devi Sridhar, chair of global public health, University of Edinburgh

The West Bank, including Jerusalem:

- UNICEF's Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa stated that "this year has been the deadliest year on record for children in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, with conflict-related violence reaching unprecedented levels."

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- Since 7 October, 313 Palestinians, including 79 children, have been killed by the Israeli Occupation forces in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. This toll represents nearly 60 per cent of all Palestinians killed in the West Bank this year. With a total of 522 Palestinians killed in the West Bank, 2023 is one of the deadliest year for Palestinians in the West Bank.
- Since 7 October, Israeli occupation forces have injured 3,822 Palestinian civilians, including at least 576 children.
- Since 7 October, at least 198 Palestinian households comprising 1,208 people, including 586 children, have been displaced amid settler violence and access restrictions. The displaced households are from at least 15 herding/Bedouin communities. More than half of the displacements occurred on 12, 15, and 28 October, affecting seven communities.

Urgent Needs:

- Immediate cessation of Israeli brutal war against Palestinian civilians.
- Urgent implementation of international humanitarian laws protecting health institutions and civilians.
- Immediate and unconditional entry of humanitarian and health supplies into Gaza.
- Aiding in evacuating the wounded in need for treatment abroad.
- Halt forcible displacement of civilians.
- Urgent support for search and rescue operations.

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